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even the marks of the burnisher are still distinguishable after several thousand impressions.

Both the public and the artist are eminently benefitted by this discovery ; the public, by having a multitude of impressions as good as copper-plate proofs, and the artist in greatly extending the range of his reputation by the permanence thus given to the finest and most characteristic touches of his hand.

N° IV.

TAKING CASTS OF LEAVES AND FOLIAGE.

The SILVER ISIS MEDAL was this Session presented to Mr. W. DEEBLE, of Seymour Place, Islington, for his METHOD OF TAKING CASTS OF LEAVES AND FOLIAGE, Specimens of which have been placed in the Society's Repository.

SIR ;

1, Seymour-place, Islington.

I HAVE ventured to offer to the notice of the Society of Arts, &c. a specimen selected from casts of leaves and other parts of plants, obtained by a process which, though very simple, is, for any thing I know to the contrary, new.

The object I proposed in making casts similar to the one now submitted, was to supply myself with fac-similes of the form and texture of those plants, which, as an engraver, I might have to introduce in the foreground of landscapes. It

is well known, that those who have attained eminence in landscape engraving, have devoted a large portion of time to actual study in the fields. I need not allude to the difficulties which deny this practice to a man engaged in a profession demanding his own almost unassisted exertions, especially in a metropolis; nor mention how the inaptness of season or situation will prevent the obtaining of such plants as may be immediately wanted. These circumstances suggested to me the advantage, and a trial proved the practicability, of procuring, at an easy expense either of labour or money, accurate casts of the most common and conspicuous plants; after a few experiments, I perfected a process which I will describe, that succeeded to an extent of which the Society may form their own opinion from the specimen produced.

If the purpose I have named were the only one to which casts of this nature were applicable, or if I thought that my success was the limit of their perfection, I would not have troubled the Society with their consideration; but it has been imagined that practice in the operation of making the moulds, would lead to a degree of improvement of which my attempt gives a very inadequate idea; and which would render the casts useful for completing botanical collections, or illustrating botanical distinctions; and farther, that the exhibition of the varied forms and convolutions of flowers and leaves, in such a material as plaster of Paris, would suggest adaptations and combinations which might be made available to the decorative purposes of architecture; and prevent that perpetual recurrence to examples of antique ornament that stigmatizes the architectural talent of modern Europe.

I am not aware if these are objects that would be worthy of the promotion and patronage of the Society, supposing the probability of it even to be as great as I am flattered it is by

the friends who have advised this communication. For myself, I have merely to say I shall be happy to exhibit the means to the Society, and more so, if they can discover in them any prospect of permanent good.

I am, Sir,
&c. &c. &c.

WM. DEEBLE.

The following are the particulars of Mr. Deeble's process: The leaf, as soon as convenient after being gathered, is to be laid on fine-grained moist sand in a perfectly natural position, having that surface uppermost which is to form the cast, and being banked up by sand in order that it may be perfectly supported. It is then, by means of a broad camel-hair brush, to be covered over with a thin coating of wax and Burgundy pitch, rendered fluid by heat. The leaf being now removed from the sand and dipped in cold water, the wax becomes hard, and at the same time sufficiently tough to allow the leaf to be ripped off without altering its form. This being done, the wax mould is placed on moist sand and banked up as the leaf itself was; it is then covered with plaster of Paris made thin, care being taken that the plaster is accurately forced into all the interstices of the mould by means of a camel-hair brush. As soon as the plaster has set, the warmth thus produced softens the wax, which in consequence of the moisture of the plaster is prevented from adhering thereto, and with a little dexterity it may be rolled up, parting completely from the cast, without injuring it in the smallest degree.

Casts thus obtained are very perfect, have a high relief, and are excellent models either for the draughtsman or for the moulder of architectural ornaments.